



**U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
**Office of Information**  
**Press Service**



Release - Immediate.

January 7, 1929.

**JARDINE RECOMMENDS APPROPRIATION  
FOR PREDATORY ANIMAL CONTROL**  
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**Tells Congress a Ten-Year Program in Cooperation  
With States is a Tangible Form  
of Relief to Agriculture**  
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In compliance with a request made by Congress, Secretary of Agriculture Jardine has transmitted to the two Houses a report on investigations made by the Bureau of Biological Survey showing the feasibility of a 10-year cooperative program of predatory-animal control, and recommends annual appropriations of \$1,373,700 for the next ten years to carry the program into effect. On January 3 the report was referred to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, of which Senator Charles L. McNary (Oregon) is chairman, and to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, of which Gilbert N. Haugen (Iowa) is chairman. It has been <sup>printed</sup> ordered <sup>as</sup> House Document No. 496. The conclusion of the Secretary after a careful consideration of the whole plan was that the 10-year program as proposed would be entirely feasible from the standpoint of the biological problems involved and that it would be in effect a most tangible form of agricultural relief.

For more than 12 years the department, through the Biological Survey, has been working for the control of predatory animals that are injurious to agriculture, horticulture, forestry, animal husbandry, and wild game, and the smaller rodents that feed on growing and stored crops, forest and other nursery stock, and the range grasses that support the farming and livestock industries.

The 10-year cooperative program, if approved by Congress, would be concerned with the control of such destroyers of livestock and game as wolves, coyotes, mountain lions, bobcats, and predatory bears, and of such smaller predators as prairie dogs, ground squirrels, pocket gophers, jack rabbits, woodchucks, porcupines, mice, rats, and moles, most of which are termed rodents by the scientist.

Even with the inadequate facilities that have thus far been made available for control operations, the department estimates that the savings effected have been more than \$10 for every dollar spent. The intensive 10-year program, it is stated, should make it possible not only to prevent constant reinfestation of cleared areas and thus make the savings permanent, but to conduct work on the public domain and cooperatively on areas where heretofore it has been impossible to operate for lack of funds. The department recognizes the definite obligation of the Federal Government to prevent its lands from being centers of infestation to the detriment of neighboring farmers and stockmen.

The department does not contemplate complete eradication of these predatory animals, and recognizes that in some areas this is neither practicable nor advisable. The proposed plan, when fully effective, should, however, so bring the animals under control that their damage will be negligible and in many cases ended completely. In devising the 10-year program, the department consulted State officials and other cooperators, and received assurances from them that they would support the program and continue the present ratio of cooperative expenditure on the average of approximately  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 1, if and when the increased Federal expenditures are authorized.

The department estimates that at present the predatory wolves, coyotes, mountain lions, and bobcats take annual toll in livestock and game to the value of \$30,000,000. The most persistently destructive of the lot is the coyote, an animal that is responsible also for transmitting to livestock and human beings such dread diseases as rabies and tularemia. This predator is not confined to Western ranges.

Last year, in a New York county bordering Lake Ontario, coyotes destroyed \$10,000 worth of sheep. More than a million coyotes have been killed by predatory-animal hunters of the Biological Survey during the past 12 years.

Less sensational, but possibly more widespread losses are inflicted by the rodents and other smaller predators. The department estimates that the toll taken by these species runs into the hundreds of millions of dollars annually. Their control is stated to be one of the most tangible means of increasing production and profits in agriculture, horticulture, stock-raising, and forestry. Execution of the control program requires the closest cooperation of Federal and State officials and individual farmers. Operations are needed not only cooperatively on private lands, but on the public domain, including 8,000,000 acres of infested national forest lands.

Probably the most destructive animal pest against which the program of control is planned is the house rat. In spite of the control operations undertaken and the warnings sounded in the past, rats constitute a very great economic menace both in destroying growing and stored agricultural products and other property and in spreading bubonic plague and other diseases.

Since the department was given the responsibility of rodent control it has conceived plans and evolved and put into operation a technique that have effected the hearty cooperation of many thousands of farmers and landowners, and thus brought about the practical elimination of certain rodent pests, including prairie dogs, over millions of acres of valuable agricultural lands. The 10-year program devised should effectively extend the control operations, particularly as it is demonstrated to farmers of all sections that the losses due to the depredations of rodent pests need not be tolerated.

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